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USDA'S REPORT TO CONSUMERS

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YOGURT IS THE WINNER

Backing Up Tradition. In European and Asian countries, eating large quantities of yogurt has traditionally been associated with good nutrition and long life. Generally, nutritionists have considered the nutritive quality of the various types of fermented milks to be similar. However, recent research shows that yogurt is superior in nutritional quality to other fermented milks, as well as to fresh milk. In tests conducted by scientists of USDA's Agricultural Research Service, young growing rats were fed a variety of fermented and non-fermented milks. The fermented products included yogurt; three types of acidophilus milk and two types of buttermilk, each made with a different bacteria strain, and milk with lactic acid added. Uninoculated fresh milk was fed as the control. The fermented milks were made from the same batch of fresh milk which included whole milk, low-fat milk, and low-fat milk with vitamins and essential trace elements added. But, it didn't matter what the yogurt was made from. In all cases, the young rats fed the yogurt, whether made from whole, low-fat or vitamin-enriched milk, grew and gained weight faster than rats fed acidophilus milk, buttermilk, or uninoculated fresh milk. There is no information on what flavor of yogurt the rats preferred.

WHAT'S GOING ON OUTSIDE?

Exterior Wood Finishes. Since early colonial times, Americans have painted their buildings. White was the predominate color for homes; red, the common color for farm buildings. The color choices were made because of their durability, and perhaps because of limited choices. We still paint our buildings for the same reasons as did the colonial Americans: To produce a color change, to hide defects, to add to the beauty and neatness of the building, and to protect the wood. But, the materials and methods we use are considerably changed. A USDA color slide set, "Exterior Finishes For Wood," discusses these now-available materials and their proper use to give maximum durability and beauty to modern wood exteriors. The presentation illustrates the importance of selecting compatible finishes for commonly-used wood siding materials, the characteristics of the various types of finishes, the steps involved in successful application, and the essential safety precautions. Recommendations in the slide set are based on information gathered during more than 50 years of research by Forest Service scientists. As designed, the slide presentation, with accompanying narrative guide and "Utilization Guide," can serve as the basis for an informative program under the leadership of a teacher or group leader. The 65-frame color sets can be purchased for \$23.00 per set from: Bureau of Audio Visual Instruction, P.O. Box 2093, Madison, WI 53701.

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A NEW INFORMATION SOURCE

For Part-Time Farmers and Gardeners. Quite aside from people who work full-time to produce food, there is an increasing number of other Americans who are growing food, part-time. Participants in part-time food production range from urban and suburban people who own small acreages on which they spend weekends, or rural people who own, rent or live on acreages from which they obtain a part of their income, to individuals who plant gardens in the city, suburbia or in the country. Reasons for this interest in production of food can range from "fun" to "necessity." With all these part-time food producers in mind, USDA has developed a new series of fact sheets that provide brief, specific, how-to-do-it information on many activities that are needed or recommended for success in growing your own food. Each publication in the series, known collectively as "Fact Sheets for Part-Time Farmers and Gardeners," is designed with no more than four pages, 8½ x 11 inches in size, and punched for notebook storage. So far, seven fact sheets are available:

- Brooding and Rearing Chicks for the Family Flock (AFS 3-6-1)
- Keeping Layers for the Family Egg Supply (AFS 3-6-2)
- Making and Using Compost (AFS 4-5-1)
- Steps in Fertilizing Garden Soil (AFS 4-5-2)
- Animal Manure for Crop Production (AFS 4-5-3)
- Starting Plants from Seeds (AFS 8-9-1)
- Vegetable Harvest and Storage (AFS 8-13-1)

Single free copies of each fact sheet are available from the Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250. Additional fact sheets will be released as prepared. Eventually, the collection of current and future fact sheets will be available for sale from the Government Printing Office.

WE ARE WHAT WE EAT

No Matter Where We Eat It. American consumers spent just under \$200 billion on food in 1976. This is seven percent more than we spent in 1975. The increase reflects both a significant gain in total food use and a three percent hike in food prices. About \$150 billion of the total bill went for food eaten at home; the remaining \$50 billion was spent at restaurants, fast food outlets and other places away from home.

COMPLETING YOUR SUIT

Second Booklet Available. If you obtained and used a copy of "Sewing Menswear: Pants," issued several months ago by USDA's Extension Service, you will be interested in knowing of "Sewing Menswear: Jackets." With this new Extension Service booklet, you can now complete your suit--if you have enough material leftover from the pants. With winter coming on, some of you may want copies of both booklets which are for sale from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. "Sewing Menswear: Pants" is 70 cents a copy; "Sewing Menswear: Jackets" is 80 cents. Both booklets give information on choosing styles, patterns and materials; details on measuring and pattern alterations; tips and instructions on construction; and helpful hints on finishing.

SERVICE is a monthly newsletter of consumer interest. It is designed for those who report to the individual consumer rather than for mass distribution. For information about items in this issue, write Lillie Vincent, Editor of Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Special Reports Division, Room 459-A, Washington, DC 20250, or Telephone 202-447-5437.

